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SBC And State Leaders Discuss Future Plans

NASHVILLE (BP) — More than 600 Southern Baptist agency staff members and Baptist state convention workers met here for the first time in a joint session to discuss over-all convention plans for the remaining years of the 1960's and for the 1970's.

Never before in Southern Baptist history have state convention workers met with their SBC counterparts in such a big joint session to discuss the convention's long range plans.

The convention plans for 1968-70 and for 1970 onward, were presented in panel discussion by SBC leaders. Then the 600 Baptist workers divided into smaller groups to dis-

Small group sessions were held for state convention and SBC workers in areas of Sunday school, Training Union, Church Music, Student Work, Brotherhood, Woman's Missionary Union, Evangelism, Missions, Church Architec-

ture, Church Services, National Baptists, Stewardship and others. Executive Secretaries of state conventions meeting with SBC agency heads and editors of Baptist state papers also held meetings.

During two of the small group sessions the Training Union workers discussed the possibility of changing the name of the Sunday evening training program in Southern Baptist churches, and student workers asked the Sunday School Board to request an overall study on the total program of SBC student work.

Most of the four day session, however, was devoted to discussion of Southern Baptist plans for the Crusade of the Americas, to a planning process by state and SBC workers called Cooperative Promotion Planning, and to the theme of the convention for the years of the 1970's.

Cooperative Program Planning made its debut before the state convention workers and SBC workers. It is a plan developed by the Inter-Agency Council of the SBC, setting up a process for SBC and

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Hemispheric Day Of Prayer Set Jan. 14

The Hemispheric Day of Prayer for The Crusade of The Americas and Soul-Winning Commitment Day emphases have been set for Sunday, January 14, 1968.

Baptists in North, Central, and South America will be praying for God's continuing blessings upon the Crusade of the Americas.

A layman will be leading in a special prayer for the crusade at each service. Special attention will be given in opening assemblies for Sunday School and Training Union.

Families will be praying for the "breath of God" upon this program for revival. Think what this could mean as thousands in the Americas join in earnest prayer for revival! Every Christian will want to be involved.

PACT is an international prayer agreement whereby prayer partners will be linked

in the interest of the Crusade of the Americas.

This will be programed by W.M.U. Early in 1968, detailed plans for PACT will be introduced through W.M.U. magazines and other denominational publications.

A leaflet will be available which will include a blank to be completed and sent to Women's Missionary Union headquarters in Birmingham. There prayer partners will be assigned.

On Soul - Winning Commitment Day many pastors will be emphasizing soul - winning in sermons, mail-outs, and other ways. This will be followed by an appeal for Christians to commit themselves to do personal witnessing.

Those committed will be trained on the three Wednesday evenings following Commitment Day. Materials for this can be ordered from Church Literature Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee.

A form for ordering "The Christian Witness" is on the Soul - Winning Commitment Day poster which has been mailed to pastors.

The Pastors Guide for training committed witnesses has also been mailed to pastors for use in training sessions.

NO PAPER NEXT WEEK

According to custom of many years, there will be no issue of the Baptist Record next week, which is Christmas week. The next issue will appear Jan. 4.

The Members and Employees of THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD

Extend to All of Our Readers

Best Wishes for a

Merry Christmas

and

Happy New Year

By Rev. Curtis Dickinson
From The Defender (Condensed)

The angel said to the shepherds, "Fear not!" These words will be echoed millions of times this month in carols, pageants and sermons.

What is there about Christmas to fear? How can there be fear when good will is being poured out from every page of every newspaper, from every commercial on every TV set and from every clerk in every store; and when the strains of Christmas lullabies are pealing forth from the loudspeakers from every direction, until one would like to escape from the ceaseless blast of an insipid praise to the season?

The words of the angel are irrelevant to the modern man. He has learned to tranquilize his fears. Socially he conforms to the world and is accepted. Financially he has the promise of security from the cradle to the grave. Physically he looks to medical science and confidently anticipates a cure for whatever disease might befall him. Spiritually he has been convinced that God is the Father of all, that all men are brothers, and therefore if there is anything to judgement or another life after this one, all will be in the same boat. There is evidence that modern man would rather go to hell with the majority than to enjoy immortality with the extremist minority!

So, there's nothing to fear and the angel might as well save his breath.

Of course, the shepherds of Judaea felt differently. When

Hospital Names New Staffer

Paul J. Pryor, administrator of Mississippi Baptist Hospital, has announced the appointment of Earl William Eddins, Jr., as assistant administrator of the hospital.

A native of Muskogee, Oklahoma, Mr. Eddins received his bachelor's degree in business administration from Oklahoma State University and a degree from Oklahoma Baptist University in hospital administration.

Mr. Eddins began his career in hospital administration in 1959 at the Oklahoma Baptist Hospital in Muskogee, Oklahoma, as assistant administrator. He returned to school in 1961 at Washington University for his master's degree in hospital administration.

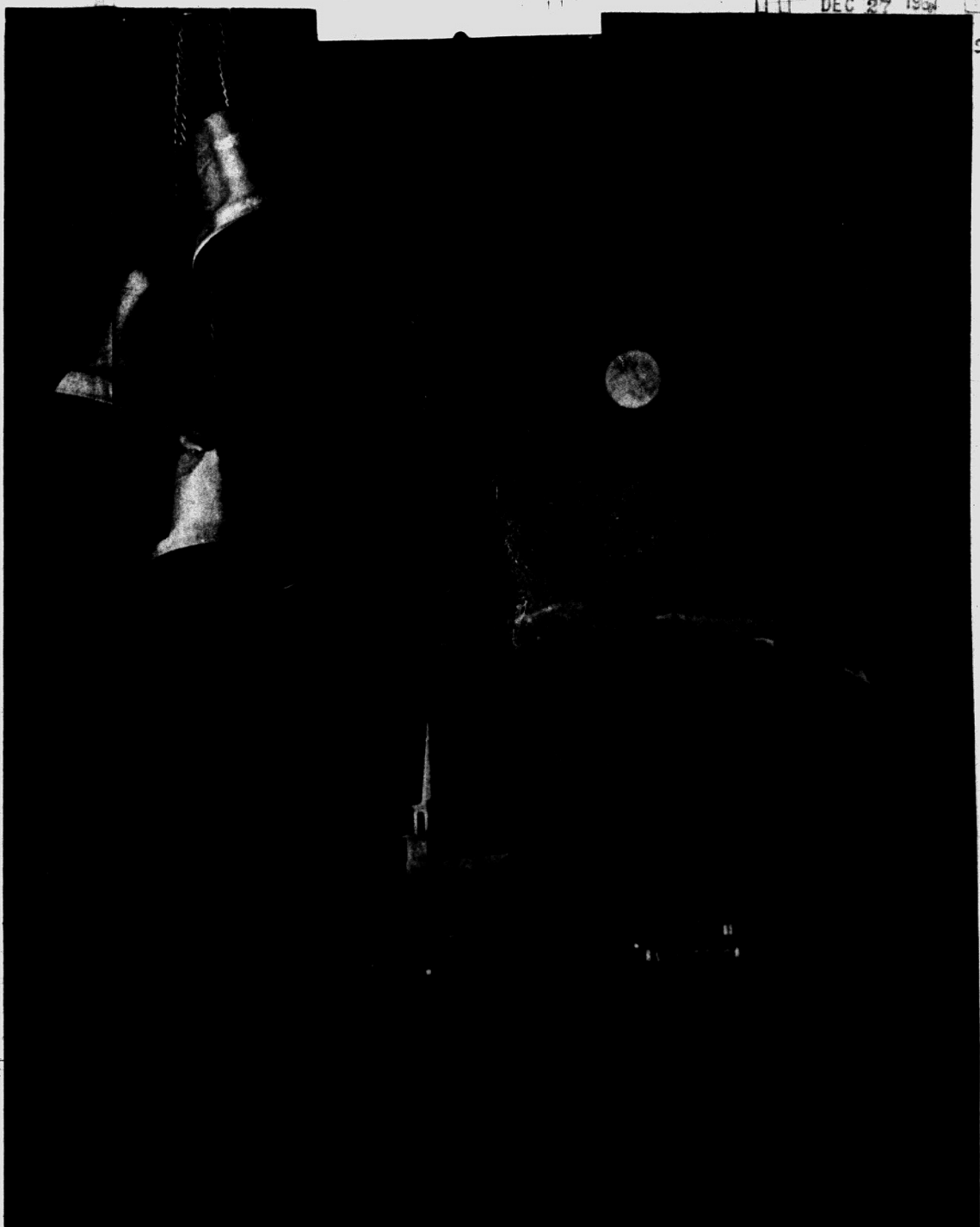
In 1962 Mr. Eddins became associated with the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock as an administrative resident and left there in 1963 to be administrator of the Baptist Hospital of Scottsdale in Scottsdale, Arizona. He continued in this position until his association with Mississippi Baptist Hospital on November 20.

Mr. Eddins is married to the former Phyllis Cummins of Steelville, Missouri. She is a 1957 graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton.

Mr. and Mrs. Eddins have two sons. The boys are Brad, eight years old, and David, four years old. The family is temporarily located at 813 Poplar Street in Jackson.

The Mississippi Baptist Hospital is an institution of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

(For photo of Mr. Eddins turn to page 4).



H. Armstrong Roberts Photo

Christmas Message Of The President BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

Monrovia, Liberia
December 1967

The significance of the Christmas even in the history of mankind is verily great. This occasion will again be hailed and saluted by Christians throughout the world with all that it implies. Without the immaculate birth of the Saviour, there could be no redemption through his suffering, crucifixion and triumphant resurrection. God incarnate, in Bethlehem's lowly manger made his blessed advent to a world then as now filled with human passion, greed, impatience, selfishness, intolerance, prejudice, suffering, suspicion, and hate, and in need of good-will, love, and peace.

As the angelic choir then heralded the glad tidings, the same good news now needs to be experienced by all, for whose redemption he left his throne, become flesh and dwelt among men, imparting those principles which alone can produce a new life to all who accept and practice them. May the earth submit to his Lordship and the consciences of men be dominated by his mind.

On this glorious occasion I heartily greet every member of our Baptist family in particular, and all mankind in general in the name of the blessed Prince of Peace.

In the year 1967 some have been fortunate to bask in the sunshine of good health, prosperity and happiness, others have suffered from the ravages of hunger and disease in shades of gloom, under torture and in misery. While some have enjoyed the comforts of homes amidst tranquil surroundings, others have been separated from their families and friends and have experienced wintry days and the horrors of bloody wars.

While some have accumulated more and more wealth, others have suffered the distress of poverty. Still others have had the woeful experience of exploitation, social injustice and degradation. Thus bitter resentments have been given outward expression in various forms, precipitating chaotic conditions and peace-infractions of a magnitude disturbing and detrimental

to society.

However, viewing soberly the conditions of our time, there exists much to be thankful to Almighty God for. Man's impatience and restlessness make it difficult for him to note duly the gains made. But the facts still remain to be seen and appreciated by those who objectively make proper assessments of God's goodness and take recognition of his blessings.

We glorify God for the blessings granted unto the church in its outreach in distant areas of our world and its increasing influence and continual growth by the spread of the Word and through evangelism. While we can be hopeful that the day of peace and good-will for all mankind will come, we should not relent in our prayers for this peace.

With joined hands stretched across the continents and the isles of the seas, let us with dedication seek peace and pursue it. Let us battle incessantly against all evil forces that are destructive to good human relations.

Let us cultivate and practice a high sense of morality in our dealings with our fellowmen. Let us not be motivated by materialistic expediences, but let us, with appreciation of permanent values, act in conformity with the dictates of the "Still Small Voice."

Let us ever seek opportunities to minister unto others rather than to be ministered unto. Let us in our attitude and behavior express genuine love rather than merely demonstrating acts of compassion.

Let faith in ourselves never diminish, nor faith in others weaken, as our reliance on God remains firm.

Let us realize our oneness in Christ Jesus our Lord. In unity of purpose, cooperative action and Christlike living let us courageously go forth into the future, not numbering years but practicing genuine human brotherhood and Christian fellowship, to the glory of him who has condescended to make us all joint heirs of a heritage of immeasurable value.

May the blessings of contentment and peace be the continuing gift to all mankind.

William R. Tolbert, Jr., President
BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

Fear... At Christmas

is eating Christmas candy, and nobody understands the angel's "Fear not."

If I were to try to put my finger on the reason why there is so much commercialization of Christmas and so little actual realization of the Christian reality of Christmas, it would be right here: man no longer has a healthy fear of Almighty God. There can be no understanding of the "glad tidings of great joy" until first there is the real fear of the Creator's just judgment.

There is plenty of fear today in the world. Many physicians tell us fear is the cause of most of the physical disorders of the day. Hospitals are filled with those who are mentally and physically disabled by fear. But these fears do not stem from the proper motivation: the fear of God. Rather they are produced by the complexities of a world which tries to operate without God. In fact, most of the fears of modern man exist because deep in his heart he simply does not believe God. He is more afraid of being burned by the bomb that is being burned in the lake of fire. He is afraid of failing to measure up in the eyes of his family, friends, and associates, but not afraid of failing to measure up to God's commands. He is afraid of spoiling his self-styled "image," not afraid of spoiling God's image, the pattern in which he was created.

It is this fear of the wrong things that takes away the potential for joy at Christmas — or any other time. And, of

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The Baptist Record

Largest Circulation of Any Newspaper
Of Any Kind In Mississippi
JOE T. ODLE, Editor

Light For The World's Darkness

Christmas is here! All of the world where the influence of the Christian message has come is aglow with the glory of the Christmas celebration.

Why all this excitement? As author Roark Bradford asked in his little Christmas classic, "How come Christmas?"

Many things are involved in the modern Christmas celebration. There are Christmas trees, gifts, lights, Santa Claus, music, cards, parties, happy children, family gatherings, busy mail men, programs, and much, much more.

Each of these has become an important part of the Christmas celebration, but do they really explain Christmas? The answer must be "No!"

One could discard Santa Claus and giving, or parties and festivities, and still have Christmas.

One could do away with trees and lights, and wrappings and tinsel, and still have Christmas.

One could forget many other modern customs, and the day still would come.

The real meaning of Christmas is in the eternal story which is proclaimed anew each Christmas day. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Why has this message changed history, and brought world-wide celebration, year after year, century after century?

Perhaps Isaiah the prophet has summarized it in his prophecy (Isaiah 9:2) "The people that walked in

darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Matt. 4: 16 says that this prophecy was fulfilled in the coming of Christ. Let us briefly consider the meaning of these words.

There was darkness in Isaiah's day and that darkness had become even deeper in the hour when Christ came to earth. Darkness still is in the world, for even in our enlightened day, political darkness, moral darkness and, especially spiritual darkness, is every where. Darkness!

Then the light burst forth! The glory of the Lord filled the gloom. The coming of the baby to Bethlehem's manger fulfilled prophecy. That explains "How come Christmas?"

Central to all that happened at Bethlehem was that God was in Christ coming into the world of men. Isaiah prophesied "Immanuel," and Matthew tells of the fulfillment in Christ. Immanuel means "God with us." God came into the world. The baby born in the manger was Deity. He had existed as one with the Father before the world was. Now in the miraculous incarnation He had taken upon himself humanity. In the virgin birth he became man, yet he was God. The Son of Man, the Son of God. John tells us that as the incarnate one He was the Light of the world.

Jesus Christ was God come into the world. He was God before he came into the world; He was God when he took upon him the humanity of the flesh; He was God when he walked among men; He was God when he went to the cross; He was God when he arose from the tomb; He was God when he appeared after his resurrection; He was God when he went back to glory; He is God as he makes intercession for us in heaven today; He will be God as he returns in his Second Coming; He will be God through all the eternities. No wonder His coming to Bethlehem was "light shining in darkness."

Another word in the story further reveals the meaning of Bethlehem. Over and over the Scripture says, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the

Lord by the prophet." The events of the first Christmas were not accidents in history. They were fulfillment of the purposes and plans of God. God was still running the world according to plan. The unbelief of men, and the Satanic control of the world, does not alter God's plans. At least 38 prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were perfectly fulfilled: Not one prophecy failed.

What does this mean? It means that God's purposes do not fail. All that He purposed in Christ's first coming was perfectly done. Since this is true we can be confident that all that is prophesied concerning the Second Coming and other future events also will come to pass. There is no uncertainty as to the future, as far as God's plans are concerned.

The person with an open Bible understands world events. History has meaning. Mankind is not racing onward by blind chance. God still is on his throne, and in his own way and at his own time, will intervene in history again, as he has revealed through his prophets. Christmas is "light shining in darkness" because it reveals that God still directs his world. Men may rebel against Him and in their rebellion bring tragedy and sorrow to the world, but God's ultimate plans will not fail.

There is a third meaning of Christmas which makes it "light in darkness." This Son of God who came into the world exactly according to the plan of God, came to be the world's Saviour. The world in darkness needed a saviour, and in Christ that saviour was provided. The problem of the world is sin. Men are lost and need redemption. Bethlehem and Calvary and the Resurrection go together. They are all part of the same plan... God's plan of redemption.

This then is the meaning of Christmas. God came into the world, according to his own purpose and plan, to seek and to save lost men.

No wonder it is spoken of as "the light shineth in darkness!"

No wonder the world celebrates as Christmas returns each year!



A synthetic marijuana may add to man's misery. Dr. Mitchell Balter, a research psychologist with the National Institute on Mental Health and an authority on drug use, said he was deeply worried that organized crime might begin producing and marketing synthetic marijuana. Dr. Balter said there were reports that the effects of the recently synthesized drug closely resembled those produced by natural marijuana and that small amounts of it were already on the street.

The synthetic marijuana — an odorless, colorless liquid — was developed in a laboratory in Israel last year. The psychologist said such a product would be much more attractive to organized crime, because natural marijuana was so bulky, it was difficult to handle. (New York Times, October 27)

You can count on the Mafia always being crooked. Nicholas Gage of Wall Street Journal (October 26) reports the Mafia is not an Equal Opportunity Employer. Much of the organized underworld's estimated annual take of \$2 billion from the numbers racket and \$350 million from narcotics is drawn from Negro neighborhoods.

The reporter says few if any Negroes are in top positions in the Mafia. It is dangerous to be ambitious.

"Pollute thy neighbor" seems to be the practice of the majority of U.S. cities and towns says Fortune magazine (October 1967). They report the preferred solid-waste handling techniques today entail gathering the trash noisily and expensively into trucks, carrying it outside the city limits, and dumping it on a neighboring political jurisdiction. Sometimes when a dump becomes too large or too much of a nuisance, fires are started so as to permit obliging winds to carry off the dry and burning fragments of paper, autos, and cats in the form of an oily, rich smelling smoke... thereby polluting the air for all surrounding areas.

"I am no calamity howler stating that the foundations are shaken but have you noticed the little cracks in the ground?" — "A Drink At Joel's Place," Jess Moody

Calendar of Prayer

(This list is not compiled according to birthdays.)

December 25—Hollis Bryant, Jones County, supt. of missions; Zeno Wells, Jackson County supt. of missions.

December 26—Jimmy Lampkin, Baptist Book Store; Mrs. Jan Nix, staff, Children's Village.

December 27—L. M. Ladner, staff, Wm. Carey College; Bess Hutchins, faculty, Blue Mountain College.

December 28 — Mrs. Evelyn Gordon, housemother, Gilfoy School of Nursing; Mrs. James L. Clark, faculty, Clarke College.

December 29 — Anne McWilliams, Baptist Building; Pat Turner, Baptist headquarters.

December 30—Gladys Bryant, East Central Junior College, Baptist student director; J. B. Costlow, Clarke College, Baptist student director.

December 31—Mrs. Grace Caperton, Mississippi College faculty; Henry C. Carroll, Mississippi College faculty.

The Baptist Record

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Student Night

At Christmas

Set For Dec. 31

"Unto the Least of These" will be theme of "Student Night at Christmas" programs to be held in many Baptist churches in Mississippi and the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday night, Dec. 31.

For several years the last Sunday night in December has been observed in this way by the churches with the programs rendered by college students who are at home for the holidays.

This program is sponsored by the Student Department of the Baptist Southern States Board, Mississippi, and the Department of Student Work of the State Convention Board, Rev. Ralph B. Winders, director.

"Student Night at Christmas helps to strengthen the tie between the student and the church, and at the same time acquaints those who are in high school with the spiritual ministry to Baptist students and faculty members on the college campus," Mr. Winders said in urging churches to observe the program.

Leaders Meet ---

(Continued from page 1)

state convention program leaders to cooperate in planning and selecting denominational emphases, goals and projects for assisting the churches.

One of the plans is a simplified version of a former program called State Strategy. Program planning staff members of SBC agencies would meet with state convention program planners to outline the promotional emphases and plans for promotion.

Major Crusade of the America's plans included Project 500, a plan to establish 500 new churches and church type missions in key, strategically located sites, as part of the Crusade, and a plan called Pact, a process of pairing churches, families and individuals as prayer partners during the Crusade.

Another plan presented for the first time for discussion was the proposed outline for a process in planning the convention emphasis for the years 1974-80. Part of the plan was to hold 40 "grass roots" conferences composed of one-third each of SBC leaders, state leaders and local church leaders.

During reports of the small groups to the full conference several state leaders observed that they felt the need to be involved in planning SBC programs at an earlier stage.

Next year the meeting will be expanded to involve not only state convention leaders but also leaders at the associational level. About 1200 Baptist workers are expected in the sessions next year. The meeting will be held December 9-12.

Fear --- At Christmas

(Continued from page 1)

course Christ seeks to fill us with peace and joy at all times. One may be afraid he will choose the wrong gift, or that he will not receive the desired gift, or that he will miss out on the festival party where sick appetites are satiated, or he may be afraid of the future—the war, his job or any number of things. To one who is only concerned with his material and social status the birth of Jesus could mean very little. But if ever he learns to concern himself with God and God's eternal purpose, then the words, "Fear not," and the subsequent message of salvation from sin and death become a message of great joy and glad tidings indeed.

Why Fear?

Why fear? The misguided keepers of our mental health would tell us that we should have no fears; and in order to eradicate them they erase all rule of right and wrong. They may call it "relativity" or "situation ethics" or some other sophisticated name. But what it means is that there is no Ruler of the Universe to make the rules. Therefore we make our own, as long as we can get by with it. "God" becomes only the creation of one's own thinking, and so there is no accounting except to one's self. This gets rid of any fear of sin and fear of judgment. But it leaves a great hollowiness, a dead vac-

uum, a wild looseness like that of a ship without anchor or rudder. Hence a greater fear—an unknown and indescribable fear—is generated, and the last state is worse than the first.

To speak to man in this state of mind about "glad tidings of great joy" is to talk nonsense. From his secular position in the world the birth of Jesus is nothing more than beautiful tradition. It is no wonder he turns Christmas into a pagan holiday with Santa Claus its chief symbol, and the satisfaction of the flesh the chief end. The frustrations of life are drowned out in the feasts, parties, family gatherings and the excitement of the day, then suddenly it is over and in its wake an aching emptiness. Men have not understood the angel's "fear not," for they feared the wrong things.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). This fear is not a craven fear. Rather it is a healthy respect and reverence for God's will and eternal design. It is this realization that gives a man a wholesome "fear of the Lord," and which motivates him to place his trust and his life in the hands of the Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Such a noble fear drives a man to act as it did those shepherds of Judea: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is,

come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us" (Luke 2:15). Notice that they did not say, "see IF this thing has come to pass?" It was because the angel's message, that the thing had happened as he said, that they decided to act. When a man knows that he had heard the message of God, when he knows that he must confront God as his Maker, he is eager and anxious to "see this thing that has come to pass." He needs a Saviour. The fear is essential before the tidings of Christ become "glad tidings."

Excessive drinking is blamed for nearly half of the nation's 53,000 highway deaths by a survey soon to be published by the National Highway Safety Agency. In some areas the percentage is higher, says Dr. William Haddon, Jr., director. "Almost a flat 70% of single-car accidents in such places as California, New York and various other major cities, involve substantially elevated blood alcohol levels, and at least half of them meet anybody's liberal definition of intoxication." No information was offered on the number of car deaths related to alcohol consumption in quantities less than "excessive."

To be human should be considered a privilege and not an excuse.

GRAHAM, IN JAMAICA, FACES LONG RECUPERATION

ATLANTA, Ga. (EP)—In an attempt to recover from his 11th bout with pneumonia, Evangelist Billy Graham is in Jamaica under the watchful eyes of physicians.

All appearances for the renowned preacher have been cancelled for this year and for an indefinite period of the next, according to Walter Smyth, Director of Crusades at the team office here.

Physicians are concerned because they said Dr. Graham's resistance is gone and they fear he might contract fresh infection to weaken his condition.

Billy Graham Crusades planned for 1968 include Portland, Ore.; San Antonio, Tex.; and Pittsburgh, Pa. in America. Foreign evangelistic tours were slated for Australia and New Zealand.

HUNGRY VISITOR

By Frances Fuller
Missionary
Amman, Jordan

The doorbell rang and then I opened the door to the front gate. When I opened the door a little girl was standing half in and half out of the gate, as though ready to run in either direction.

"Marhaba (hello)," I called. "Marhaba," she answered and stood there uneasily, holding on to the gate.

Her blue dress was somebody's hand-me-down. It hung off her shoulders and half-way between her knees and feet.

"Do you want something?" I asked.

"A piece of bread," she said, half eagerness, half timidity.

"Why?" and then on second thought I added, "habeebty," which is something like "my dear."

She smiled a little, let the gate go, and took a few steps toward me. She is a lovely child, graceful like little girls who have carried burdens on their heads.

Her big brown eyes turned

up to me shyly. "Because — because my sister and I want to eat it."

I looked her over carefully. Her hair was a little stiff, the way a person's hair can get in a refugee camp without enough water for bathing. "Where is your sister?"

"Over there behind the wall."

"And your mother?"

"In the house. It's not far."

"You have a house?"

"Well — a tent."

She was being very patient with my curiosity, but, of course, she was waiting for the bread. I took advantage a little longer to learn that they were refugees from Jerusalem.

"What happened in the war?" I pressed her.

The small face darkened ever so slightly. "My father died."

"Did you see it happen?"

"No. They told us."

"Who told you?"

"The government. He went and he didn't come back, and they told us he died."

"I'm sorry. He was in the army then?"

"Yes. He went to fight, and he didn't come back."

I gave her a little book with the bread and asked her if she could read it.

"No, but my little brother can."

"How old is your little brother?"

"Seven, but he reads good."

Halfway to the street she paused and looked back. "Do you want to see my sister?"

So I accompanied her to the gate, and there was a little creature with a dazzling smile who seemed to consider it fun to be found behind the wall.

"Greet the lady," the older sister instructed, and the tyke took her finger out of her mouth and reached to shake hands with me.

"If you will come another day," I told them, "I think I can find a dress for the little girl."

"Thank you," they said, and the big sister became bolder. "Or maybe a sweater or a coat, because winter is coming and we don't have any."

They went up the street eating the bread. Two little drops out of an ocean of disaster. They had no way of knowing they had spoiled my lunch—or that it didn't matter really, because this is life in Jordan and tomorrow there would be someone else, homeless and hungry, sad and beautiful.

Problems

Facing British Baptists

New general secretary David S. Russell of London has itemized the issues he says will soon face his constituents in the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

He says Baptists of England will need to tackle them with "sound judgment, mutual trust, prayerful concern, and resolute action." These are the issues:

—The attitude of Baptist churches to the ecumenical movement.

—The purpose and function of district associations of churches and their relationship to the national union.

—The effect of rapid social change and population mobility on the future pattern of the ministry.

—How to more effectively deploy ministers, funds, and buildings.

—The future relationship between the Baptist union and the Baptist Missionary Society, an independent body which serves the foreign missionary interests of Baptists in Great Britain. (EBPS)

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things which usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a private grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth, as that One Solitary Life—James A. Francis.

DEVOTIONAL

Light Of The World

By Bill Stewart, Pastor, First, Eupora

One of the most universal symbols of Christmas is "light." The use of light in decoration is sometimes garish, bright, multicolored, sometimes soft and flickering, but it always speaks of the fact that light is a part of Christmas. In fact, Christmas is celebrated because Light has come into the world.

In days long before Jesus was born, Isaiah wrote with keen insight as to man's earthly situation when he penned these words: "And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness." Without unduly entangling ourselves in the historical and theological ramifications of this passage, let us hear the Lord as he speaks through it to characterize every man or group of men aligned by geography and/or time as people who are in "trouble and darkness."

Trouble is a term descriptive of the predicament of men apart from God, men are in trouble because their minds do not think right, their hearts do not respond right, their bodies do not live right. They are at odds with themselves and with each other. Stumbling in darkness they seek a way out. The result is that men of all ages have cried "there is no exit." BUT THERE IS AN EXIT!

Isaiah continues to write "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

John writes in the Gospel that light did come when the Word became flesh and "in him was life and the life was the light of man." (John 1:4)

At last men without direction, lacking stability and seeing no hope saw a light. "That was the true Light" (John 1:9), which the darkness could not overcome. Tragically enough the Bible says that "men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil." Because of this many of the dwellers in darkness reject the Light, thereby refusing "the way" out, thereby choosing death. Is Jesus the light of your world?

The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin.
The Light of the world is Jesus;
Like sunshine at noonday His glory shone in
The Light of the world is Jesus;
Come to the Light, 'tis shining for thee;
Sweeter the Light has dawned upon me,
Once I was blind, but now I can see:
The Light of the world is Jesus.

Philip D. Bliss

One Greater Than The Prophets

(INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON)

By Clifton J. Allen

Malachi 3:1-4; Micah 5:2-5; Isaiah 9:1-7

Malachi was God's messenger to tell of the coming Messiah. Micah much earlier had declared the Messiah would come and rule in the majesty of the Lord. Isaiah declared the Messiah would sit upon the throne of David and reign forever.

"Hail, thou long-expected Jesus,

Born to set Thy people free:
From our sins and fears release us;

Let us find our rest in thee."

PROMISE OF THE SAVIOUR (Mal. 3:1-4; 4:2)

A messenger would prepare the way for the Messiah. This was fulfilled by the ministry of John the Baptist. The Lord, whom the people in Judah pretended to seek, would suddenly come—come in speedy judgment. His coming would be for the purpose of purifying his people—to burn the dross away and cleanse men's hearts with thoroughness. The severity of the purifying process was suggested by the way

silver is purified and gold purified.

Malachi declared further that the Messiah would be the Sun of righteousness. This figure impresses the truth that the righteousness of God in Christ is light for the world.

BIRTH OF THE SAVIOUR (Mic. 5:2-4)

The prophet Micah expected the Redeemer of Israel to be of the family of David. He, therefore, declared that Bethlehem, the city of David, would be exalted as the birthplace of the Messiah. His kingdom would be everlasting and universal.

The prophecy of Micah was fulfilled when Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. His birth was announced by the angel of the Lord. A heavenly choir sang an anthem of praise. Humble shepherds heard the good tidings of the Saviour's birth, went to Bethlehem and found "the babe lying in a manger," and glorified God for what they had heard and seen.

Jesus—Object Of Our Worship

(LIFE AND WORK CURRICULUM)

By Bill Duncan

Luke 2: 8-19; Matt. 2:1-11

The true spirit of Christmas is remembered when we realize that Jesus is the object of our worship. The commercial promoters have done much to symbolize Christmas as everything from a Christmas Queen to a red-nosed reindeer.

Born Savior of the World

In the days of Jesus the birth of a child was an occasion of great joy and music, especially if it were a boy. When Jesus was born there were no local musicians gathered to rejoice over His coming, but the angels of heaven came and sang, announcing His birth and His purpose. The announcement was first made to the shepherds, who were despised by the orthodox because of their common position in society and because of their occupation of uncleanness. Many have thought that these shepherds could have been the ones responsible for the private sacrificial Temple lambs that were pastured near Beth-

lehem. The angels said that a Savior had been born for them, who was Christ the Lord, and the unusual child would be found in an unusual place—a manger. This evidence was made known by the shepherds to the whole world. The song of the night announced that the child's mission was to bring peace to the hearts of men who were of good will. All the events of His mission are not foretold here, but enough is told for man to find Him the object of their song and worship. The glory of heaven came to earth to testify that this was the long-expected Savior who would take away the sins of men who would worship Him.

Born King of the Jews
This account of the birth of Jesus emphasizes that He was born according to the Old Testament as the King of the Jews. Jesus is shown to be the answer to the dreams of the Jews, that one who was a descendant of David would come to lead the people to the full expectation as the chosen people of God. The birth place of Jesus is Bethlehem, the

(Continued On Page 4)

AT THE MANGER—Janice and Blake McGaughy pose as Mary and Joseph. Rev. E. A. Autry rewrites the script for the pageant every year, (staying very close to the Bible,) and also does the narrating. His wife, the writer of the accompanying article, and his daughter, Mrs. Mack Thompson, Jr., are in charge of the music. The preliminary choral music is by Pine Grove Church, Benton County (where Mr. Autry is pastor). The choir is directed by Elond E. Autry.

Their Dream Came True

By Lola M. Autry
Whippoorwill Valley,
Hickory Flat

It was Christmastime, 1958. High on a hill overlooking the little Tippah River a multicolored star gleamed and sparkled through the leafless bottom timber. From a mile and a half away, we saw it. We did not realize then that Fred and Inez McGaughy, by putting up that star, had begun a project that would touch the lives of people for hundreds of miles around.

The McGaughys live in the Abel's Store Community about halfway between Hickory Flat and Ashland, Mississippi. They are people of perhaps average income, but with an unusual dream. That dream is to help all those who come their way during the Christmas season to realize more fully the true meaning of the birth of Jesus.

The next December, they again put up the star. Twenty-four feet across and outlined with lights, the star hung forty feet high in a tree atop the hill behind their house. That year they added the figures of a camel, a pyramid and three wise men. These three placed in a cotton field in front of their house near State Highway 5. The camel and pyramid were made of painted plywood; the wise men were clothes-draped frames. At nightfall under a spotlight the scene became strangely real and arresting.

But this still was not enough. In 1960 Fred and Inez called us. They wanted to tape record the Christmas story in word and song to further share the message of Christmas by an amplifier and loud speakers.

Three weeks before Christmas the script was ready, the music prepared, and arrangements made with others in the community to share in making the recording.

Meanwhile, further additions were being made to the scene in the cottonfield. At one end of the field were the wise men and camel. At the other was the shepherd scene, complete with shepherds, sheep and a hovering angel. At the rear of the field was the sleeping town of Bethlehem. The houses were of cardboard with lights shining from their windows. A manger scene was placed in the foreground in front of the town. Plans called for each scene to be lighted in turn as the taped narrative progressed, until the entire panorama was ablaze with lights.

No announcements had been made that anything special would happen each night in the big field beside the winding blacktop highway. But cars would round the bend, brake suddenly, then slow to a crawl and then stop. That year hundreds came to see the scenes and to listen to the story.

In the following years Fred and Inez added other scenes. A plywood donkey was tied outside the creche. A shepherd seated in front of a blazing fire joined the other shepherds, while palm trees appeared near the pyramid. One year the McGaughy children, Jan and Blake, were allowed to portray Mary and Joseph. Jan now helps operate the lights and the tape recorder and recently Blake, dressed as a white bearded Bible character, has turned the pages of a four-by-eight Bible as the prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus have been read.

Each year since 1960 a new

script has been prepared, usually with sound effects such as the tinkling of sheep bells, the wind-blowing in the desert and the hammering of the nails in the cross. In recent years not only the story of the birth of Jesus has been included but also His death, burial and resurrection. The concluding scenes have emphasized once again the birth of the Babe in the manger.

Although there has never been any direct advertising, the crowds of spectators have increased from hundreds to thousands. At 8 o'clock each night from a week before Christmas until three or four days after our little highway is lined with cars as far as the eye can see. All other available parking space off the highway is full—in the yard of the community store, down the side road past the field, up the road to the McGaughy house.

A visitor's register was used for the first time in 1965. Only an estimated one-fifth of those who saw the pageant signed

it, but these included families from fifty towns and cities of Mississippi and from fifteen other states. And the response was even greater in 1966. No charge has ever been made or even an offering taken.

One man, a professed unbeliever in Christ, drove sixty miles to discover what the talk of the Christmas pageant that "covered an entire field and climbed the hill beyond" was about. He came on Sunday night and saw it twice. On Monday night, he came again. "If Christ was born and died this way," he said, "then I, too, may believe."

So Fred and Inez McGaughy's dream has come true, not only for them but for their children, for us and for our community. Because of it, all those who pass our way again this Christmas season may carry away in their hearts and minds the picture and story of the Babe of Bethlehem who became the Christ of the cross and our Redeemer.—Reprinted from Moody Monthly. Used by permission.

SCRAPBOOK

The Birthday

Rejoice and be merry in song
and in mirth! O praise our Redeemer,
all mortals on earth! For this is the birthday of Jesus our King,
who brought us salvation, His praises we'll sing!—From an old church gallery book—discovered in Dorset, England.

Greeting Of Yore

I salute you: There is nothing I can give you which you have not; but there is much, that while I cannot give you, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today, Take Heaven. The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within our reach is joy: Take Joy. And so at this Christmas time, I greet you, with the prayer that for you, now and forever, the day breaks and the shadows flee away. — Fra Giovanni, A.D. 1513

MUSIC

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away. — Longfellow

WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM?

What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man I would do my part, yet what can I give Him: Give my heart.—Christina G. Rosetti

HOLIDAY?

In Christmas lore and folkways grand
The season's right for cheer:
True is called in embattled lands—
A foil for blinding fear.

A Star, a lesser light all year,
Aims wide its laser beams
At hearts of men both far and near
To melt the hate that maims.

In darkness still a song begins
In waves of sound divine—
No screech, no blast, no jangling din—
But sweet, serene, sublime.

"A child is born," His words repeat;
"For peace—good will, He's come!"
A simple theme, yet so complete—
'Tis what would make us one.

But "No," men say, "His birth we'll keep;
The song we'll sing each year,
Beribboned gifts (of clay) we'll heap,
And shed an artful tear."

"We'll hide from faith in wells of mirth;
Each year the sign we'll read;
Of Holly, Mistletoe—no dearth;
Of More we have no need."

In Christmas lore and folkways grand
The season's rite is cheer:
True is called in embattled lands—
A mask to cover fear.—Ray Sirebeck, Hattiesburg

IN THE EYES OF A CHILD

In the eyes of a child I saw the light
Of the star that shone that first Christmas night.
—Phillis C. Michael

Bethlehem

Not stately Jerusalem,
Rather humble Bethlehem,
Giveth that which maketh life rich.
—Unknown

BRIGHT LIGHT

And now men see not the
bright light which is in the
clouds
—Job 37:21

This Baby So Fair

He was bright and wise, this baby so fair;
And they knelt when they saw Him, and worshipped Him there.

The Son of God, Jesus Christ is His name,
To save His people from their sins He came!

And this message He promises to you on this holy night,
"Believe now on me, and all will be right!"
—From a longer poem by Fred Trentler, Jr., State Line

Gladde Things

Of gladde things there be four, as four:
Larks above ye singe most blithely singing,
A white Rose chiding
In safety to a flock, a Shepherd bringing
A Lamb found in his arms,
And Christmas Bells a-ringing.
—Anonymous (Sixteenth Century)



"MERRY CHRISTMAS"—(RNS Photo)



DR. BOB N. RAMSAY, pastor of First Church, Brookhaven, (right), is seen receiving the annual "Soap Box Award" from J. V. Phillips, outgoing president of the Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce.

BROOKHAVEN PASTOR GETS ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARD

Dr. Bob N. Ramsay, pastor of First Church, Brookhaven, was presented the annual "Soap Box Award" by the Brookhaven - Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce at its dinner meeting Dec. 8.

The award was presented by J. V. Phillips, outgoing president, before more than 300 people of the business and professional community who attended the 38th annual meeting held in Brookhaven.

Mr. Phillips said that "each year it is our pleasure to recognize an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to our community. The symbol of this recognition is the Soap Box Award, the highest honor we can bestow."

The award was given to Dr. Ramsay, who is also first vice - president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, in recognition of his part in bringing about better understanding between the Negro and white races of the community.

Specifically the citation tells of Dr. Ramsay learning that "forces had gathered in antagonistic centers and that a clash of these forces (Negro and white) threatened the well being of his community."

Continuing, the citation said that "because of his deep personal concern for people," he walked, uninvited, into the meeting of men "who were seeking to understand each other but with little success."

"He talked and his voice was heard . . . When he finished he had committed himself to a task. A task not yet finished and one that perhaps has no ending."

"The task to him reduces itself to people and to these people he has imparted something of himself. Because of him there are more who are conscious of what they had forgotten. They remember to look for that some good that is in every man."

According to sources in Brookhaven, substantial progress has been made in the community, both in human relationships in general and in

THOUSANDS In CHILE RESPOND

A young man slipped out of the Third Baptist Church of Santiago, Chile. For three blocks he walked into the night. Then he decided he could no longer resist the preacher's invitation to acknowledge Christ as his Lord and Saviour. Retracing his steps, he got back to the church in time to go to the counseling room with others who had made similar decisions.

Another young man was standing in line outside a theater in downtown Santiago when he heard the choir of First Baptist Church singing in the city's main plaza. He left the line to go hear the music, stayed for a message by a layman, and then followed the group in the plaza to a service at the church—the first evangelical church he had ever entered.

Finding in the sermon the answer to his anxieties and spiritual problems, he decided for Christ.

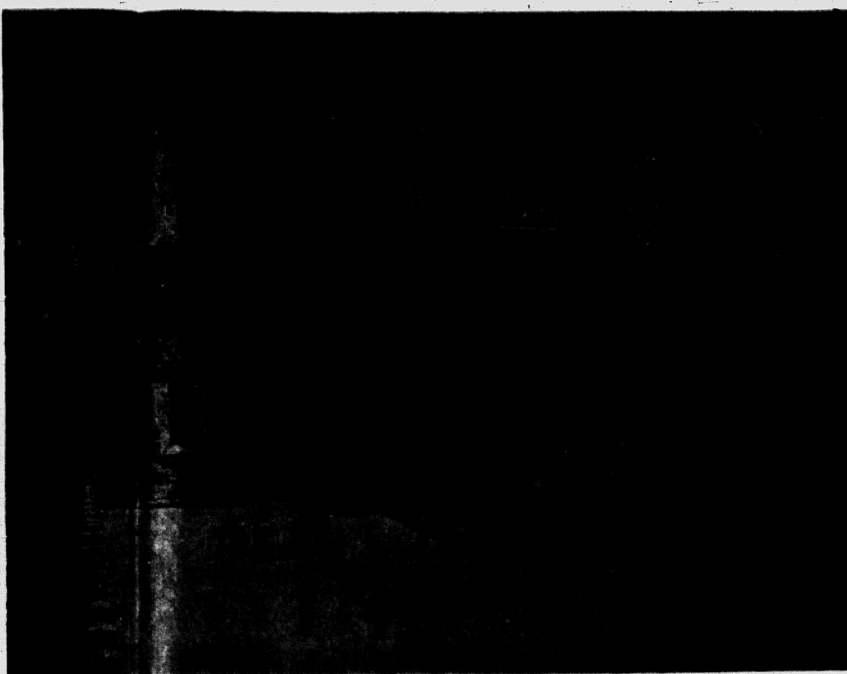
These two young Chileans are among more than 1,800 persons who made decisions during the opening week of a nationwide Baptist evangelistic campaign. Special preaching services were held in 151 churches and missions during the three-week effort.

Writing after the campaign ended November 5 but before reports were complete, Southern Baptist Missionary Evan F. Holmes predicted the final count of public professions would exceed 5,000.

race relationships in particular.

The foundation for this progress largely has been through the formation and work of a Biracial Committee on Communications of which Dr. Ramsay is chairman.

Millard Smith of Brookhaven, new president of the Chamber of Commerce, says that Dr. Ramsay is the first minister to receive the award, which has been made annually for the past eight years.



NATIVITY SQUARE, BETHLEHEM.—Some of the record 20,000 pilgrims who are expected in this quiet Judean hill city for the celebration of Christmas will gather in the Nativity Square to listen to the services broadcast from the site of the Nativity. Other services will be held on the adjacent hills of Bethlehem and in other churches in both Nazareth and Jerusalem. The Israel Government has made special efforts to accommodate the pilgrims. (Photo by Israel Government Tourist Office.)

Hints For Happy Christmas

I. Locate Christmas. Locate it in the midst of this turbulent, transitional era of the world which so misunderstands the Christmas idea and has so warped it out of its setting.

II. Contemplate Christmas. Meditate upon its meaning and message.

III. Catch the holiday spirit. Let the tension of toil relax a bit. Rejoice!

IV. Determine to have a good good time. It is wrong to be wry-faced and sour. It is right to be rollicking in season.

V. Spread the spirit of cheer. Who can resist a beaming face? The ring of the cheery word is like the tang of mountain air.

VI. The helping hand is often the secret of Christmas happiness . . . As you help others, the joy-light in your

own bosom flames higher and higher.

VII. It is a good time to straighten out the kinks that have tangled your life during the year. That harsh word you spoke—you have never sought pardon for it . . . And is there any coldness between you and anyone else? Melt it before the glowing Christmas fires.

VIII. Let bygones be bygones. Bury differences under the Christmas snow.

IX. Break out of the year's rut . . . Play an hour. Spend a day in a lighter vein. Pass a good word with neighbors. Consecrate your rejuvenated self to God.

X. Turn the pages of the grand old Book. Reread the Christmas story told by Matthew and Luke in verses which sparkle like the stars. Condensed from "The Teacher," December, 1940



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CAROLING on the Blue Mountain campus, in the community of Blue Mountain, for shut-ins, and at the homes of members of the faculty is a BSU-sponsored project. Left to right: Kathy Kipp, freshman from Pompano Beach, Fla.; Susie Placke, sophomore from Park Forest, Ill.; and Martha Philpot, Camden, Ala., senior, and President of the Baptist Student Union.

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"MasterControl" Special Set For Christmas Eve

"MasterControl" will feature a variety of holiday interviews and drama on a Christmas Eve special to be aired December 24. Consult your local radio log for time.

Ted Lott of Southern Baptists' Radio and Television Commission staff, which produces "MasterControl", has written a dramatic sketch entitled "In the News Tonight," which will be narrated by Bob Telford. In the Lott feature a fictitious news correspondent named Caleb telescopes 2,000 years to report the Christmas story in modern news style.

Interviews will include Bob Hope; Mrs. Frieda Ward, who operates a hospital in Jerusalem for Arab children; and greetings from Station KJNP at the North Pole.

Dr. W. Morris Ford's devotional vignette entitled "Out-grown Stockings" contrasts the traditional hanging of stockings with the modern commercial emphasis on giving.

Jesus Objects --

(Continued From Page 3)
city of David, as was foretold. Because of crowded conditions, a cave-stable was necessary to house the mother and Joseph and then the child. Men of the East came seeking the baby born King of the Jews at the palace of Herod. When Herod was approached, he reacted with hate, hostility, and fear, and all the country was fearful of him. The men, who had been supernaturally guided from the East, were filled with wonder and praise when they found the child. The scriptures do not say that they found the child the same night He was born. The world was expecting one to be born who would bring hope and light to the world. Even the Roman historians, as quoted by Barclay, are writers of the unusual expectation. This one that the Jews expected would be King, and not only was Jesus born King of the Jews, but He died as such.



THE MINISTERS' WIVES Club at William Carey College, along with husbands and children, enjoyed a campus Christmas Carol Sing on Thursday, Dec. 14. Shown above, the group gathered in front of the home of President and Mrs. J. Ralph Noonkester and sang lustily. They also sang for each of the six dormitories.



EARL WILLIAM EDDINS, JR., (above) is the new assistant administrator at the Baptist Hospital in Jackson. (Story is carried on page 1).

There is love at Christmas because Christmas was born of love. Let us, each one, keep alive this spirit of love and glorify God.—Joseph Emmes

It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas time, when its mighty founder was a child Himself.—Charles Dickens

Gyrators Meet For Banquet

The Gyrator's Club, wives of Baptist ministers in the Jackson area, held their annual Christmas Banquet on Friday evening, December 1, at First Church, Jackson.

Dr. David Grant, pastor of Broadmoor Church, served as Master of Ceremonies. After the invocation, led by Chaplain James B. Parker of the Baptist Hospital, a meal of turkey and dressing with all the trimmings was enjoyed by 21 members present and their husbands. The social chairman, Mrs. Fred Tarpley, was in charge of arrangements, assisted by Mrs. David Grant, president.

The Hinds County Baptist Quartet, presented Christmas music. The members of the quartet are: Cecil Harper, First Church; Tom Larimore, Colonial Heights; Jimmy Jones, Parkway; and Charles Muller, Woodland Hills.

Dr. Grant introduced the honor guests of the evening, Dr. and Mrs. E. L. Douglas of Clinton. Mrs. Douglas concluded the program by giving two readings. Dr. Douglas led the benediction.

The universal joy of Christmas is certainly wonderful. We ring the bells when princes are born, or toll a mournful dirge when great men pass away. Nations have their red-letter days, their carnivals and festivals, but once in the year and only once, the whole world stands still to celebrate the advent of a life. Only Jesus of Nazareth claims this worldwide, undying remembrance. You cannot cut Christmas out of the calendar, nor out of the heart of the world.—Anonymous

Every gift which is given, even though it be small, is in reality great, if it be given with affection.—Pindar

At Christmas, play and make good cheer.
For Christmas comes but once a year.—Tusser

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Macedonia Church In Lincoln County Destroyed By Fire

Macedonia Baptist Church in Lincoln County, the oldest open-country church in the state, was completely destroyed by fire Saturday afternoon of last week.

According to press reports, the fire was likely started by lightning.

Rev. Calvin Phillips is pastor. The bricks in the church were made and laid by the members of the church.

Churches In The News

The Adult Choir at Highland Church, Meridian, presented the Christmas portion of Handel's "Messiah" on Sunday evening, December 17. James B. McElroy, Choral Director at Clarke College, Newton, and interim minister of music at Highland, conducted the presentation.

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